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CLAIMS

1. Use of a bacterial strain giving rise to a significant increase in the faecal concentration of propionic acid for the manufacture of a medicament for reduction of the level of oxidative stress factors in blood in mammals including man.
2. Use according to claim 1, wherein the bacterial strain is a strain of *Lactobacillus* or *Propionibacterium*.
3. Use according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the bacterial strain is a *Lactobacillus plantarum* strain.
4. Use according to any of claims 1 to 3 of *Lactobacillus plantarum* 299v, deposition number DSM 9843.
5. Use according to any of claims 1-4 for the reduction of IL-6 in blood.
6. Use according to any of claims 1-4 for the reduction of the level of reactive oxygen species in blood.
7. Use according to any of claims 1-4 for the reduction of the adhesion of monocytes to endothelial cells.
8. Use according to any of claims 1 to 4 for the manufacture of a medicament for the prophylaxis and/or treatment of chronic inflammatory diseases.
9. Use according to claim 8, for the prophylaxis and/or treatment of rheumatic diseases.
10. Use according to claim 8, for the prophylaxis and/or treatment of psoriasis.